NEW VARIETY OF *OPUNTIA BASILARIS* (CACTACEAE) FROM UTAH

Stanley L. Welsh[1] and Elizabeth Neese[2]

Abstract.— Described as a new variety is *Opuntia basilaris* Engelm. & Bigel. var. *heilii* Welsh & Neese.

Work leading to a treatment of the flora of Utah has drawn attention to the presence of a segment of the variation within *Opuntia basilaris* that is beyond the circumscription of previously described infraspecific taxa (Benson, 1982). The plants stand apart from the remainder of the complex, being situated on saline soils of the southern end of the San Rafael Swell and the north end of the Henry Mountains. The remainder of the species is far to the south and southwest of this area.

The variety is named in honor of Kenneth Heil, enthusiastic student of the Cactaceae.

Opuntia basilaris Engelm. & Bigel. var. *heilii* Welsh & Neese. Similis var. *basilaris* sed in articulis coloris (non violaceis) glochidis stramineis et ambitis differt.

Joints spatulate to obovate, rounded to truncate apically, yellowish (rarely bluish) green; areoles lacking spines, 8–22 mm apart; glochids straw colored; flowers 4.5–6 cm long, violet; ovaries and fruit areolate, with glochids and often with spinules; fruit dry, ca 2 cm long and 1.5 cm wide; seeds ca 7.3 mm long, pale tan.

Type: USA Utah. Wayne Co., T29S, R10E, S23 (NW1½), Blue Benches SW of Hanksville, N of Henry Mts., 1464 m, sandy clay, Mancos Shale Formation, 1 July 1978, E. Neese 5938 (Holotype BRY).

Additional specimens: Emery Co., T25S, R10E, S1 (SW1½), 8.8 km WNW of Goblin Valley Campground, 1479 m, salt desert shrub community, Curtis Formation, soil powdery silty sand, 19 May 1982, E. Neese & K. Mutz 11715 (BRY); do, T26S, R9E, S4, San Rafael Swell, Keesle Country, near Delta Mine, 1586 m, ephedra-atriplex community, sandy soil and rocky outcrops, 3 June 1980, J. G. Harris 833 (BRY).

This variety is similar to var. *basilaris*, differing in subtle modifications of joint outline, in color, and in glochid color. It is isolated from the type variety by 200 km and from var. *aurea* by 100 km. It is similar in pad color to var. *aurea*, but differs in pad outline and in flower color.

Literature Cited

Benson, L. 1982. The cacti of the United States and Canada. Stanford Univ. Press, California. 1044 pp.

[1]Life Science Museum and Department of Botany and Range Science, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.
[2]Life Science Museum, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah 84602.